



Alexey Khoruzhiy
United Certification Systems Limited (UCSL)
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Sent by email

Date: 24/07/2024

Barents Sea cod, haddock and saithe, request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirements.

- V2.3 - FCP-7.29.23 - Within 60 days of completing the audit, the CAB shall upload the Surveillance Report to the MSC database for publication on the MSC website.
- V2.3 - FCP-7.30.8 - Within 60 days of announcing the expedited audit, the CAB shall upload the expedited audit report to the MSC database for publication on the MSC website.

Dear Alexey Khoruzhiy,

I write with reference to your submission on 22/07/2024 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirements (CR) to allow:

Initially, announcement of the Expedited audit was made together with 2nd Surveillance audit announcement on Feb 28th, 2024, as UCSL became aware of new information that might impact the changes to the circumstances of the current UoA. The Expedited audit was combined with the 2nd Surveillance audit and conducted remotely from Apr 8th – 10th, 2024. The results of Expedited audit will be incorporated into the 2nd SA report.

Therefore, UCSL kindly requests to delay the publication date of the 2nd surveillance and expedited audit report to the 1st October 2024.

The requirements are integral to ensuring all MSC accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies operate in a consistent and transparent manner. The MSC intends that these requirements be met across all fisheries and CoC certificate holders, except in exceptional, well-justified circumstances, as part of the MSC programme.

MSC notes the factors presented supporting your request, including:

- Harmonisation activities are still ongoing on the Northern Norwegian Coastal Cod stock.
- The latest harmonisation meeting was held on 3rd of July and resulted in an agreed common approach to follow for the Barents Sea NEA cod fisheries.
- Given the scope of work, and the need to apply amendments across all overlapping fisheries involved in the harmonisation there is a need to delay publication of the surveillance and expedited audit report.

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR in this case subject to the following conditions:

- The report shall be submitted no later than 1st October 2024.
- When requested by MSC, the CAB can confirm that it is not aware at this time of any factor (related to either fishery status, or performance against conditions) that could result in the fishery no longer being in compliance with the MSC Fisheries Standard.
- The CAB shall inform stakeholders on the delay in the publication of the expedited audit report.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery.

Marine Stewardship Council
cc: Assurance Services International